

A year of self-reflection

For the first time in my life, I can honestly say that I am starting to like myself.

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ANOTHER YEAR HAS COME AND gone. As usual, it seems the year starts out moving slowly and then all of a sudden, I am putting up Christmas decorations and getting ready to ring in the new year. It hasn't been any different this year; however, as I sit and reflect on the past year of my life, I see things very differently than previous years.

Normally, as I prepare to write my article for InMaricopa, I try to find a topic that many can relate to or it is somehow related to the time of year. For the past month, the only thing that kept coming to mind was to simply self-reflect. So, with that being said, this article will be a bit different, but it is raw and real and hopefully someone reading it can feel and know that they are not alone in whatever crap life has chosen to throw at them.

Last summer, I made the decision to leave my toxic marriage. It had been a long time coming and unfortunately, one that probably should have never even ended up at the altar. I spent more than 80% of 2024 fighting for full custody of my children while having to navigate horrific rumors being stated about myself from others. In the end, I was able to receive full custody of my children, but it came at a price and it came as the result of me seriously reflecting on myself, my values and my overall outlook on life.


Being a mental health therapist, I tend to hold myself to a higher standard and forget that I am human too. I am susceptible to poor choices in life and making mistakes. I can easily have my heart broken and I can let the wrong people in. Through my own internal work, I realized I was a doormat. I was allowing people to treat me poorly, all because I wanted to see the good in them. It is what I do for a living. I try to help people find themselves and heal; however, so many people in my personal life used that to their advantage and simply took and took from me, without truly adding value back into my life.

To start my own healing journey, I had to dive deep into why I allowed this to happen. Why did I have such low self-esteem that I was afraid of speaking my mind? I was terrified that I would say something that would bother the other person, and they would berate me or even worse, leave me. In the end, I noticed all I was doing was treating myself poorly. I have to stand up for myself and hold boundaries with people and if they choose to leave, that is on them. That is not a self-reflection of myself, but instead, a reflection of them and how little they hold our relationship importance.

Boundaries can be a scary thing to put up, especially when you never really did before. It can seem as though you are selfish. Personally, I had several people that told me how wrong I was for holding them accountable or standing up for what I truly believed in. But when I look back at those relationships, I realized they were simply upset that they could no longer use me to their advantage. It has been a freeing, scary, and humbling experience to go through, and I continue to go through it even to this day.

Change is hard. Walking away from unhappy marriages, friendships, family relationships, etc. can be so incredibly scary.

It can leave you questioning yourself and your entire existence. However, once you start to find your voice, your true self, it is so rewarding. For the first time in my life, I can honestly say that I am starting to like myself. I have never been able to say that and mean it. I was always trying to be what others wanted me to be or expected me to be and I have never truly known who I was. Well, that has all been changing. I have loved digging deep down and finding the things, and the people, that bring me true joy and happiness and most importantly, value.

As this year comes to an end, I challenge you to do the same. I challenge you to dive deep into your own existence and ask yourself, "Am I living for me or am I living for others?" Because the only person you should be living for is yourself. Once you love yourself, everything else can start to fall in place. 



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